Public procurement: simplification of the regulatory framework, follow-up of the green paper COM(1996)0583

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The aim of this Communication is to clarify the range of possibilities under the existing Community legal framework for integrating social considerations into public procurement. This Communication also figures among the actions announced in the Social Policy Agenda adopted by the European Council of Nice in December 2000. The Agenda is part of the integrated European approach set out in Lisbon whose goal is economic and social renewal. It seeks in particular to provide a dynamic and positive interaction between economic, social and employment policies, which mutually reinforce one another. More specifically, the Communication interprets existing law, comprising EC Treaty Internal Market rules and the public procurement Directives. It therefore refers both to public contracts that are covered by the EC Directives on public procurement as well as those that are not covered by these Directives but are nevertheless subject to Treaty rules. In doing so, it seeks to reconcile the respective goals of social policy and efficient and fair public procurement in the Internal market.